

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 02201 160817Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00

NSAE-00 /017 W

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R 160607Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1863

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USNATO BRUSSELS 493

AMEMBASSY BONN

RUFHJJ USMISSION BERLIN 873

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 2201

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE, CVIS, BU

SUBJECT: NON-IMMIGRANT VISA FEES

REF: A) STATE 252742; B) SOFIA 0973

1. ON SEPTEMBER 27, 1976 EMBASSY RECEIVED MFA NOTE STATING THAT GOB PREPARED TO CONCLUDE NO-VISA REGIME, BUT NOT PREPARED TO REDUCE VISA FEES. FOLLOWING THIS ON OCTOBER 4, DCM AND CONSUL MET WITH AMBASSADOR ZHELENSKI, CHIEF OF CONSULAR DEPT, MFA FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

2. ZHELENSKI REITERATED THE POINTS OF THE MFA NOTE AND ADDED THAT VISA FEES WERE A SUBSTANTIAL SOURCE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR GOB. IN FACT, TO CONCLUDE NO-FEE VISA REGIME WITH US WOULD LEAD TO PROBLEMS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES PRESENTLY PAYING VISA FEES. ZHELENSKI CONTINUED TO PRESS FOR NO-VISA REGIME, TO WHICH DCM REPLIED THAT A
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PAGE 02 SOFIA 02201 160817Z

NO-VISA REGIME WOULD REQUIRE A REVISION OF US LAW BY

CONGRESS; HOWEVER A NO-FEE VISA REGIME COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION AND WOULD CONFORM TO CSCE GUIDELINES.

3. EMBASSY NOTES NO GIVE IN BULGARIAN POSITION AND SEES NO LIKELIHOOD OF CHANGE IN THE FUTURE. RECOMMEND WE CHANGE NIV FEES TO PARALLEL GOB, AS STATED REF B. THIS WOULD BE \$18.72 SINCE GOB CURRENTLY CHARGING BL 10 FOR VISA WITH BL 8 SURCHARGE FOR ISSUANCE AT POINT OF ARRIVAL. (MOST BULGARIAN EMBASSIES ABROAD DECLINE TO ISSUE VISITOR'S VISAS AND INSIST TRAVELERS OBTAIN VISAS AT ENTRY POINTS.)
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